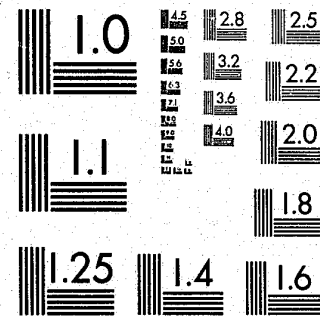


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# CONTROLLING POLICE CORRUPTION

## Summary Report

National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice  
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration  
United States Department of Justice





# **CONTROLLING POLICE CORRUPTION**

## **THE EFFECTS OF REFORM POLICIES**

### **Summary Report**

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This project was supported by Grant #75-NI-99-0024 awarded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice, under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, to the Department of Sociology, Yale University, Professor Albert J. Reiss, Jr., Project Director. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice  
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration  
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**CONTENTS**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....                   | iv |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....                 | 1  |
| I. PURPOSE.....                         | 3  |
| II. SCOPE.....                          | 3  |
| III. METHODOLOGY .....                  | 4  |
| IV. FINDINGS .....                      | 6  |
| A. Corruption Before the Scandal .....  | 6  |
| B. Organizational Reform Policies ..... | 6  |
| C. Corruption After Reform .....        | 11 |
| V. CONCLUSIONS .....                    | 12 |
| APPENDIX: SOURCES OF DATA .....         | 14 |

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the means by which police corruption can be controlled.

### II. Scope

Four police departments were studied, each of which had experienced a major scandal over police corruption. A new police executive was appointed with a mandate to reform the department in each of these cities: Oakland, California (1955); New York, New York (1970); Newburgh, New York (1972); and pseudonymous "Central City" (1974).

### III. Methodology

Policies for controlling corruption were identified through interviews with police executives and analysis of various documents. Changes over time (before and after the scandal) in corruption were measured by eight indicators of the level of *organization* of corruption. Corruption reports, allegations, and rumors from a variety of sources, mostly written, were pinpointed in time of occurrence and analyzed for the level of organization they indicated to be present in corruption on a year to year basis.

### IV. Findings

#### A. Corruption Before the Scandal

All four cities had a high level of organization in police corruption prior to the scandal.

#### B. Organizational Reform Policies

Three of the police departments adopted policies aimed at preventing and detecting ongoing corruption, and one adopted policies aimed only at responding to allegations of past corruption. The policies aimed at ongoing corruption involved tighter administrative control, attempts to change the aspects of the organizational environment encouraging corruption, and covert internal investigations initiated by internal policing units.

#### C. Corruption After Reform

The level of organization present in corruption, as measured by the indicators used in this study, declined substantially in all four cities after the adoption of reform policies. However, in the one city which focused on past corruption, only one year of data was gathered. The decline of corruption organization in that city may be attributable solely to the effects of scandal.

### V. Conclusions

A. Premonitory strategies (aimed at ongoing corruption) for corruption control can reduce the level of organization of police corruption.

B. Postmonitory strategies (aimed at past corruption) for corruption control do not seem to be as effective as premonitory strategies.

C. The same strategies for corruption control can be employed in a police department of any size, although the tactics may differ.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to explore the means by which police corruption can be controlled. The focus of the study is on the policies adopted by four reform police executives who took office after a scandal over police corruption. The study examines three problems:

- 1. the nature of police corruption prior to the scandals
- 2. the strategies and tactics used to control

police corruption

3. the changing nature of police corruption in the wake of scandal and reform.

Since the study does not employ a pure experimental design, the findings are not intended to be conclusive. Rather, the study is exploratory, and its findings should be treated as hypotheses about the relationship between certain reform policies and a decline in police corruption.

II. SCOPE

Four urban police departments were selected for the study. The departments vary widely in size, form of government, and geographic region, as Table I indicates. The specific years under study and the total number of years studied in each city also vary sub-

stantially. The selection of both the cities and the time periods studied was determined largely by the availability of essential data, and by the decisions of the police departments to provide needed access.

Table 1

Contextual Differences Among the Four Case Studies

| Differences            | Cities       |              |                 |                 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                        | New York     | Central City | Oakland         | Newburgh        |
| Population Size        | 8,000,000*   | 750,000*     | 376,000         | 26,200          |
| Police Department Size | 30,000*      | 1,100*       | 700             | 70              |
| Form of Government     | Strong Mayor | Strong Mayor | Council-Manager | Council-Manager |
| Geographic Region      | Northeast    | Midwest      | West Coast      | Northeast       |

\*approximate

The Oakland, California, Police Department experienced a corruption scandal in 1955, and a new police executive was appointed immediately. Data on police corruption in Oakland were gathered for the period 1953 to 1959.

The New York City Police Department experienced a corruption scandal in 1970, and a new police executive was appointed six months later. Data on police corruption in New York were gathered for the period 1968 to 1974.

The Newburgh, New York, Police Department experienced a corruption scandal in 1972; a new police executive was appointed some months later, but the executive implementing the reform policies

was not appointed until 1974. Data on corruption in Newburgh were gathered for the period 1970-1975.

The "Central City" Police Department, which was promised anonymity as a condition of study, experienced a corruption scandal in early 1974. A new police executive was appointed immediately. Data on police corruption in Central City could be gathered only for the period 1969 to early 1975.

Despite the variations in time periods, enough years were studied in each city to provide a picture of trends in corruption over time. The major limitation is that the Central City data extend only one year beyond the scandal, in contrast to the three or more years studied after the scandal in the other cities.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employs a wide variety of sources of data, not all of which are available for all four cities.

The specific sources employed in each city are listed in the appendix. In general, the study relies on inter-



views, official police department records, and newspaper accounts to reconstruct the changes in both corruption control policies and police corruption.

### A. Corruption Control Policies

Corruption control policies were selected for study on the basis of two criteria. First, some hunches about the kinds of policies most directly affecting corruption were developed in the course of preliminary research. Second, the reform police executives in each case described their own inventory of the policies they formulated for the purpose of controlling corruption. All four reform executives employed two basic kinds of corruption control policies: (1) managerial strategies for preventing or reducing the opportunities for corrupt acts, and (2) internal policing strategies for apprehending and punishing corrupt police officers.

Both managerial and internal policing strategies for corruption control are classified as either *premonitory* or *postmonitory*. Premonitory strategies attempt to identify and anticipate corruption before or during its occurrence, in order to prevent or intercept corrupt acts. Postmonitory strategies respond to corruption after it has already occurred. The study analyzes the specific managerial and internal policing strategies in each city in detail in order to classify them as either premonitory or postmonitory.

### B. The Organization of Corruption

Changes over time in police corruption are measured, not in terms of the *number* of corrupt events (which could not be counted with any reliability or validity), but rather in terms of the amount of degree of organization evident in the corrupt acts reported or alleged by all available sources. Organization of corruption is treated as a *quantity* which varies from one corrupt act to another according to how much cooperation is evident among those participating in such acts. The study does not measure how much corruption there is at any given point in time. Instead, the study measures how much organization there is in the corruption that is reported to have occurred at each point in time.

The focus on the quantity of organization present in reported corruption can be justified from the standpoint of both theory and policy. The theoretical importance of organization in criminal activity is that it affects the probability of its detection. The greater the amount of organization, the more vulnerable criminal activity is to detection. Admittedly, criminal activity is often organized specifically to avoid detection. Even so, cooperatively organized criminal activ-

ity is more predictable than criminal acts committed by lone individuals. Predictable crimes can be intercepted in progress, making them more vulnerable to detection than unpredictable crimes. The empirical evidence gathered in the study supports the assumption that participants view organized corruption as more vulnerable to detection than individualized corruption. If the reform policies are perceived as increasing the possibility of detection, then organized corruption would be expected to decline. Put another way, the assumption is that an increased threat of detection will produce a decrease in the organization of corruption.

A decreased level of organization in police corruption appears to be desirable as an objective of public policy. Law enforcement is less thoroughly subverted by the corruption of police officers on an individual basis than by the purchase of immunity to arrest from, say, an entire vice squad. In purely statistical terms, there is a better chance that the law will be enforced if corruption transactions can only occur with one officer at a time than if a single corruption transaction can buy off many officers at once.

The study does not attempt to assess the deterrence of individualized police corruption. A reliable count of the number of individual corruption events would be required for measuring change in the amount of individual corruption, and such a count is impossible. Moreover, all of the scandals leading to reform policies were concerned with organized corruption. A reduction in the organization of corruption, therefore, is defined here as successful control of police corruption.

### C. Indicators of Corruption Organization

The overall amount of organization present in police corruption is measured on an annual basis by eight indicators of four different kinds of cooperative organization. Active and passive cooperation among officers, citizen-police cooperation, and duration of cooperation are separate but related dimensions of the amount of organization present in corrupt activity.

Most of the indicators are based upon a key distinction between corruption *events* and corruption *arrangements*. In the argot of the New York City police, this distinction is similar to that between "scores" and "pads." Corruption events ("scores") are one-time transactions which are never repeated between the same individual officer(s) and citizen(s). An example is a bribe from a motorist stopped for speeding. Corruption arrangements (similar to but more inclusive than "pads") are corrupt activities which feature a continuing relationship among parties

to the corruption. Arrangements may consist solely of police officers, as in a police burglary ring, or may include citizens, as in a steady payment from a brothelkeeper for immunity from arrest.

While it is possible for a lone corruption event to feature a high level of organization, arrangements are always assumed to be a more organized form of corruption than events. This assumption is justified by the theoretical concern for predictability. As a repetitive set of acts, an arrangement is always more predictable than an event.

1. *Active cooperation among officers* is measured by the number of officers participating in all reported corruption arrangements. The exact number of officers participating in each arrangement cannot always be ascertained, but it is always possible to distinguish between those arrangements involving only one officer and those involving two or more. The number of two-or-more officer arrangements, divided by the total number of reported arrangements, expresses the annual level of active cooperation among officers in police corruption.

2. *Passive cooperation among officers* is measured by three separate indicators. Two indicators measure the failure of officers to report *officially* the involvement of their fellow officers in corruption activities. Both indicators are based on the diversity of corruption activities. Based upon all sources of reports of corruption—almost none of which are from officers making official reports on their colleagues at the time of the corruption activities in question—the number of types of corruption activities present in a police department varies substantially on an annual basis. In some years, corruption may be alleged to have occurred in gambling, narcotics, traffic and prostitution enforcement. In other years, only traffic and gambling corruption may have allegedly occurred.

The diversity of types of corruption seems to be highly correlated with the number of units in which corruption activities are present. The types of corruption an officer can engage in are limited to a great extent by his functional or geographic assignment. Gambling corruption is possible in the vice squad, for example, but may be virtually impossible in a suburban, residential patrol precinct. Thus, the more diversity of types of corruption occurring in a given year, the more units corruption was present in. The more units in which honest officers did not report officially on the corruption of their colleagues, the greater the passive participation in corruption among officers.

Diversity of corruption is indicated in two ways.

One indicator measures the number of types of corruption arrangements present each year. Another indicator counts the total types of corruption arrangements and corruption events present each year.

A second kind of passive cooperation among officers who receive no financial benefit from corruption is the failure to arrest criminals who have paid superior officers for protection from the law. Because of the pyramidal structure of police organizations, the higher the rank of the superior officer, the more officers there usually are under his command. Therefore, the higher the rank level at which at least one superior officer is reported to be corrupt, the more officers there may be passively cooperating with corruption. The assumptions here are that the subordinates of the corrupt superior are not all sharing in the money paid, and that the corruption is not a solely individual act of the superior (e.g. perjury) and requires the cooperation of his subordinates.

3. *Citizen-Police cooperation* is measured by two indicators of the relationship between police and citizens in corruption activities. Citizens often seek out the cooperation of the police in a corruption relationship. Other citizens may seek to avoid cooperation in police corruption and may be described as victims of corruption (if the police obtain money or other goods from them). The relative proportions of corruption activities in which citizens are consenting partners indicate the level of citizen-police cooperation.

One indicator of the level of citizen-police cooperation in corruption is the annual ratio between the number of types of vice activities protected by corruption and the number of types of crimes initiated by the police. The protection of vice activities features voluntary cooperation of those citizens engaging in such vice businesses as prostitution and gambling. The corrupt crimes initiated by the police, such as burglary and fencing, almost never feature the cooperation of citizens. The more types of vice corruption there are relative to the number of types of police-initiated crimes, the greater the overall level of citizen-police cooperation in corruption.

Another indicator of citizen-police cooperation uses a wider range of the data on types of corruption reported. This indicator classifies every type of corruption, and not just those in the categories of vice protection and police initiated crimes, as having either a consenting or a victimizing relationship with a citizen. The higher the ratio between the number of consenting types of corruption and the number of victimizing types of corruption, the more citizen-police cooperation in corruption.

4. *Duration of cooperation* is measured by the relative numbers of corruption arrangements and events each year. Arrangements, by definition, continue over an extended period of time. Events typically last only a few moments, and never more than a few hours. The more arrangements there are relative to the number of events, the more duration over time there is overall in cooperation in corruption. The ratio between arrangements and events is constructed in two ways. One indicator is the annual ratio be-

tween *types* of arrangements and types of events. Another is the annual ratio between the *number* of corruption arrangements and the number of corruption events. Since there may be several cases of the same type of corruption reported in a year, these ratios have different numbers. If they are both measuring the same phenomenon, however, they should move in the same direction on a year to year basis.

## IV. FINDINGS

### A. Corruption Before the Scandal

Police corruption was highly organized in all four cities prior to the scandal. Most corruption arrangements involved more than one officer in all four cities. Corruption was reported at very high ranks in all four, from Captain in Oakland to the Chief in Newburgh. Corruption was more diverse in the larger departments, but all of them experienced a diverse range of corruption activities. Vice protection, police burglary, and extortion or theft from arrested citizens were present in all four cities.

There was a high level of citizen-police cooperation in all cities but Newburgh. The duration of cooperation in corruption was quite high in all four cities, with corruption arrangements outweighing corruption events. Three factors seem to be related to the high level of organization: the police task environment, the political environment, and the nature of organizational controls. Most of these factors changed as the level of corruption organization declined after the scandal.

1. *Task environment*: Extensive opportunities for corruption were inherent in the police task environment in all four cities prior to the scandal. These opportunities included widespread gambling, narcotics sales, and other vice activities. The demands of "honest citizens" such as motorists and merchants for police corruption were also extensive. Finally, the structuring of tasks by the administrative policies of the police departments made it relatively easy to exploit the task-related opportunities for corruption prior to the scandal.

2. *Political environment*: In all cities except New York, there was a strong linkage between politicians and police corruption prior to the scandal. Politicians in all cities but New York were reportedly arranging for police protection of vice operations, sometimes without any payments being made to police officers. Political influences on assignments

and promotions were the basis of political control of police corruption. Free-lance corruption by individual officers was not discouraged by the politicians in Oakland or Newburgh, but it was discouraged in Central City.

3. *Organizational control*: In all cities but Newburgh, the high level of organization in corruption prior to the scandal existed despite the presence of organizational controls designed to deter corruption. In every case, however, the nature of the organizational control was postmonitory, dealing with corruption only after it was discovered—generally only when discovered by someone outside the department. The postmonitory corruption controls did not focus on either the task environment or the political environment as sources of organized corruption. Rather, the controls consisted merely of reacting to and investigating complaints that corruption had occurred. The one exception to this rule was Central City, which attempted to weed out officers committing free-lance corruption events which might have called public attention to the politically-organized corruption arrangements.

### B. Organizational Reform Policies

When the scandal over police corruption occurred, a new police executive was appointed with a mandate to reform the police department. The policies that the new police executives adopted to reform their organizations were remarkably similar in three of the cities: Oakland, New York and Newburgh. These three cities employed similar basic strategies, although the tactics were different in each case. Central City, however, adopted a different basic strategy.

The reform executive in Central City maintained a completely postmonitory approach to corruption, seeking out the truth of allegations that had been made in the course of the scandal and doing relatively

little to detect any possible ongoing corruption. In the other three cities, the reform executives focused on current corruption conditions rather than on past accusations. Their managerial and internal policing strategies were respectively aimed at reducing the chances that corruption would occur, and detecting any corruption that did occur while it was ongoing rather than after the fact.

While many different specific policies must be lumped together in order to label a police executive's general strategy for corruption control, the managerial and internal policing strategies can be classified as either postmonitory or premonitory.

Table 2

Reform Policies in Four Police Departments

| Managerial Controls |              |             |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Internal Policing   | Postmonitory | Premonitory |
|                     |              | New York    |
|                     |              | Oakland     |
| Postmonitory        | Central City | Newburgh    |

Table 2 classifies the four cities according to control strategy adopted by the reform police executives. The specific policies used in each city which form the basis of this classification are described below.

1. *Managerial strategies*. Two distinct premonitory, managerial strategies for preventing corruption were employed in Oakland, New York and Newburgh. One strategy was internal, focused on the administration and operations of the police department. The other strategy was external, directed at those aspects of the environment of the police organization which help to foster organized corruption.

The internal managerial strategies for preventing corruption were: high personnel turnover, accountability of supervisors for the acts of subordinates, tighter supervision, and ending police department policies which encourage corruption.

a. *Personnel turnover*. In a police department which has experienced highly organized corruption, high turnover of personnel can eliminate many opportunities for corruption. Citizens and police cooperating in corruption do so on the basis of relationships built up over a period of years. If many of the police officers participating in such relationships leave or are removed from the police department under a reform administration, the level of cooperation in corruption activities seems likely to go down. New officers hired in place of those who leave would have to be recruited into the corruption activities almost immediately in order to sustain the same level of cooperation. Such instant recruitment seems unlikely if

the remaining corrupt officers are unwilling to trust the new recruits, and changes in the recruit socialization process make the recruits value honesty and fear punishment for corruption.

Both of these conditions were present in Oakland and Newburgh; only the second was present in New York; and Central City was unable to hire recruits for fiscal reasons during the one post-scandal year studied. High turnover of personnel, therefore, can be considered to have had an effect on corruption only in Oakland and Newburgh.

The tactics used for accomplishing an increase in the turnover rate varied considerably. The most drastic method was employed in Newburgh, though it can not be considered a police department policy: criminal convictions removed 23% of the department's officers in one fell swoop. (This traumatic blow to the department should be kept in mind, for it is probably a key cause of the disappearance of reports of police corruption in Newburgh.) The reform chief in Central City put great public pressure both on older rank and file and on high command officers to retire, succeeding only with the older rank and file. The Oakland reform chief "encouraged" older officers to retire in a more subtle fashion, mainly by making life more uncomfortable for them through increased standards of spit-and-polish appearance. The New York reform executive ignored the rank and file turnover rate, but placed great public and private pressure on the non-cooperating top commanders to retire. His legal power to demote the command group largely accounts for the great success of that policy: 90% turnover in the ranks of Captain and above in three years.

b. *Accountability*. The pressure on New York commanders to retire was closely tied to the policy of holding them accountable for the corruption conditions in their commands. This controversial policy was often misunderstood as blaming the commander for each act of misconduct by subordinates. The intention, rather, was to make commanders take the initiative in detecting corruption among their subordinates and in formulating supervisory strategies for preventing corruption. While headquarters initially offered the commanders little advice or training in strategies of detection and prevention, a detailed manual of guidelines and methods was eventually provided to them.

Oakland's accountability policy was less demanding than New York's. The main thrust in Oakland was to end the pervasive supervisory practice of "covering up" the misconduct of subordinates. The policy was firmly demonstrated in the early days of the reform administration when a sergeant who re-

refused to investigate a citizen's complaint about a patrolman was punished as severely as the patrolman.

c. *Tighter supervision.* Accountability, while an important policy in itself, is also a means of producing another policy: tighter supervision. The reform executives in Newburgh, Oakland and New York all sought to have first line supervisors place a greater portion of the work time and work product of their subordinates under direct surveillance. Very different tactics were used to effect this strategy in the three cities.

The reform executive in Newburgh, as well as his three deputies (all appointed through lateral entry), conducted a program of random personal observation of field operations, particularly at night. By monitoring police radio calls, he would go to the locations where patrol officers were dispatched and observe their conduct surreptitiously. All vice and narcotic cases were conducted under the personal supervision of the reform executive. Only the small size of the city and police department made such close executive supervision feasible.

The Oakland reform executive also conducted some personal supervision, but he relied more on centralization of decision-making as the method of tighter supervision. By closing down the precinct houses and implementing a city-wide system of command on all three shifts, the Oakland chief increased the amount of information about operations that came to him. Increased paperwork and proliferation of rules required the supervisors to pay more attention to the activities of subordinates, and to send more information about those activities up to the chief. When misconduct occurred, the chief often vented his wrath personally against the guilty officer.

The Oakland tactics of the 1950's were of no use to the New York police in the 1970's. Overcentralization and a virtual flood of paperwork had produced a general absence of both supervision and digestible information. De-centralization was the New York reform executive's answer to the problem of lax supervision. The rule book was steadily cut away in order to give more decision-making authority to field commanders since they were closest to the tasks under supervision. Vice and narcotics enforcement, however, was centralized under headquarters control, with elaborate procedures for supervisory approval of and presence at all arrests in these corruption-prone tasks. Further, the number of supervisors in New York was drastically increased in all units by a 40% growth in the number of sergeants.

d. *Ending corrupting policies.* The New York reform administration also dismantled other "re-

forms" of earlier times which, in the current context, were thought to be conducive to corruption. Quota requirements for vice arrests, designed to prevent corruption by mandating enforcement, produced instead an institutionalized pattern of perjury about how the hard-to-get evidence on vice crimes was obtained. Lying to achieve legitimate enforcement objectives paved the way for lying to cover up corruption. Under reform, new methods for evaluating the performance activity of vice officers were developed which focused on the quality of arrests made rather than on the quantity: how important the arrestee was in the hierarchy of the vice activity, whether or not a conviction was obtained, and so on.

Another corrupting policy terminated in New York under reform was the practice of having detectives request reimbursement for their out-of-pocket investigative expenses at the end of each month. Since the reimbursement check was not processed for several more months, the effect of the policy was to require detectives to advance a standing loan of several hundred dollars to the department. Moreover, expenses were never reimbursed in full; a "going rate" was maintained on the basis of arrest results. Detectives were thus encouraged to make up the difference—and more—through corrupt means. A new policy removed the incentive by giving detectives a \$100 advance at the beginning of every month, for which they would later submit expense reports.

A third example of corrupting policies was the lack of money to make "buys" of narcotics that lead to arrests of high-level narcotics dealers. In the absence of a legitimate source of such funds, narcotics detectives often hold back a portion of seized narcotics to sell to their addict-informants in order to obtain "buy" money. If that money is not eventually used for "buys", the officer becomes a narcotics dealer himself. An increase in "buy money" in New York and in informer's fees in Central City reduced the incentive for this gradual slide into narcotics dealing.

Two external strategies were adopted by the reform police executives in order to attack the environmental sources of police corruption: changing the task environment in which the line officers worked, and changing the political environment of the department.

(1). *Changing the task environment.* This strategy consists of eliminating opportunities for corruption which are presented by the immediate environment in which police officers perform their daily tasks. Again, different tactics, appropriate to the particular circumstances of time and place, were used to

effect this strategy.

Gambling presented a major source of corruption opportunities in both Oakland and New York. The Oakland reform executive eliminated those opportunities by eliminating gambling through increased enforcement. In contrast, the New York reform executive reduced gambling corruption by eliminating most gambling enforcement. Defining gambling as a low enforcement priority in the community, the New York executive prohibited patrol officers from making gambling arrests except on receipt of a public complaint, and then only in the presence of a supervisor.

Bribery from the general public, particularly motorists and merchants, was a major source of corruption opportunities in Newburgh, Oakland and New York. The reform executives in all three cities made frequent appeals to the public, asking that gifts or favors of any kind not be given to the police. The Newburgh executive even pressed for the repeal of a local ordinance authorizing gifts of \$25 value or less to city employees. New York and Oakland backed up their appeals with a highly visible policy of bribery arrests. The mean monthly number of arrests of citizens for attempting to bribe police officers in New York jumped from 14 to 69, and leveled off at about

50. While citizen bribe offers were not eliminated, it is reasonable to suspect that the total number of bribe offers was reduced.

(2) *Changing the political environment.* A police executive is often viewed as being constrained by his political environment. The reform executive in Central City was indeed unable to break the linkage between politics and police corruption. But in Oakland and Newburgh, the reform police executives were able to push politics out of police corruption.

The Oakland reform chief, with the support of a reform city manager, made clear his intentions to enforce all the laws against all the people, including the City Council members. Knowledgeable observers reported that the Council was scared into honesty, and scared out of their alleged role of connecting police officers with gamblers.

In Newburgh, the reform executive tried repeatedly to mobilize a federal investigation of political corruption in the county's ruling party. Several attempts with one agency failed, but he eventually mobilized an investigation in the U.S. Attorney's office which led to the conviction of the party chairman. Other local politicians from the corrupt days either died or were encouraged by the investigation to leave politics.

Table 3  
Managerial Strategies and Tactics for Preventing Corruption

| Strategy                              | New York   | Oakland  | Newburgh   | Central City                       |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
|                                       | City and Tactics   |  |  |                                    |
| 1. High Personnel Turnover            | Overt pressure on Commanders                                       | Quiet pressure on rank and file  | Newburgh Criminal prosecution (but not by management)                  | Central City Overt pressure        |
| 2. Accountability                     | Punishing lax supervisors  | Punishing lax supervisors  | Not adopted  | Not adopted                        |
| 3. Tighter supervision                | Decentralization; supervisors present at corruptive tasks          | Centralization; rules; paper work  | Personal supervision by executive                                      | Not implemented                    |
| 4. Ending corrupting policies         | End vice arrest quotas; provide "buy" money; advance expense money | Not adopted  | Not adopted  | Increase funds for informer's fees |
| 5. Changing the task environment      | Reduce gambling enforcement; make bribery arrests                  | Increase gambling enforcement; make public appeals against "gifts"; make bribery arrests | Appeal to public to report corruption; repeal ordinance allowing gifts | Not adopted                        |
| 6. Changing the political environment | Not adopted  | Scare politicians into honesty   | Initiate federal probe of political corruption                         | Not implemented                    |
| General Management Policy             | Premonitory  | Premonitory  | Premonitory  | Postmonitory                       |

The linkage between local politics and police corruption, once severed, seems to have stayed severed in both Oakland and Newburgh. In the twenty years since the beginning of the reform administra-



tion in Oakland, there has been no report of political connections to police corruption there. The same is true in Newburgh of the four years since a reform executive took over, a shorter but still a substantial period of time for a department which had long been heavily influenced by the local politicians.

2. *Internal policing strategies.* The reform police executives made three strategic policy decisions regarding internal efforts to detect and prosecute corrupt officers. The decisions on these issues determined whether the internal policing strategy was to be postmonitory or premonitory: resources for internal policing, sources of intelligence used to gather information about police corruption, and procedures used to conduct internal investigations of corruption.

a. *Resources.* The basic resource for internal policing of corruption is a separate unit devoted solely to probing police misconduct. Only New York had such a unit prior to the scandal. All but Newburgh had such a unit under the reform executive.

A related resource issue is how many police officers should be assigned to an internal affairs division ("I.A.D."). New York drastically increased the number of officers assigned to internal policing following the scandal. The ratio of line officers to internal policing staff dropped from 533:1 to 64:1. The post-scandal ratio in Central City was 110:1, and 216:1 in Oakland. Newburgh assigned two investigators to internal policing on a 1/4 time basis, for a ratio of 160:1.

Only New York had a large enough I.A.D. after the scandal to divide the labor into sub-units. A critically important special function performed by one such unit was the analysis of corruption trends, including an "early warning system" for identifying growing areas of corruption.

b. *Initiating Investigations.* Corruption investigations are initiated on the basis of information suggesting that corruption might exist. Whether or not a given corruption activity will be investigated depends upon the sources of information received by the I.A.D. As a rule, those sources which voluntarily present information to an I.A.D. are only aware of corruption which has already occurred. In order for an I.A.D. to obtain information about ongoing corruption, it must generally seek out additional sources of information. In other words, reactively initiated investigations tend to be premonitory.

The following sources of information are discussed in the order of a continuum from the most reactive to the most proactively generated.

*Citizen complainants*, both named and anonym-

ous, are often people who define themselves as victims of corruption. Since much corruption, and perhaps most organized corruption, fails to produce "victims," citizen complainants can provide information about only a portion of the total range of corruption activities. Further, complainants often lack vital information about the corruption they do report, such as the name(s) of the corrupt officer(s). Police departments also pose difficult obstacles to citizens who try to complain, even under reform administrations. Anonymous complaints are often not even recorded, let alone investigated. Complaints from named complainants are frequently "lost." Even under a centralized system for controlling complaint intake, a New York Police Department study discovered a loss rate of up to 50% of telephoned complaints. All four cities used this source of information despite its imperfections.

*Honest police officers* have somewhat better access to information about corruption than the general public. The historical failure of honest officers to report voluntarily the corruption of their colleagues was clearly broken down during the reform administration in New York. Some instances of such voluntary reporting also occurred in post-scandal Oakland and Central City. But the honest officer only *volunteers* reports of corruption when he is very certain of his facts, beyond mere suspicion. In order to obtain a regular flow of "softer" information about things which are only suggestive of corruption, the reform administrations in Oakland and New York recruited honest officers to act as the "eyes and ears" of the I.A.D., or as critics put it, to spy on their brother officers.

*Corrupt officers*, as participants in corruption, have far greater access to information about corruption than honest officers. The New York reform administration, adopting a tactic first used by the Knapp Commission, succeeded in "turning" a few corrupt officers into sources of intelligence for internal policing. In exchange for various degrees of immunity from prosecution for their own offenses (on which the I.A.D. had strong evidence) the "turned" corrupt officers helped to gather evidence against other participants in organized corruption activities.

*Criminal informants* can have access to as much detailed information about corruption as corrupt officers, especially when cooperating citizens are an integral part of the corruption activity. In exchange for fees or other considerations such as immunity from prosecution for their own crimes, citizen informers can both identify targets for investigation and serve as undercover agents during the course of an investi-

gation. All four cities used this source of information.

*Wiretaps* of known criminals often produce information about police corruption and can identify officers apparently cooperating with the criminals. Such wiretaps can also produce information about integrity, revealing unsuccessful attempts to establish corruption arrangements. Oakland and New York both tapped criminals and officers put under suspicion by any source of intelligence, always under court orders. The Oakland reform executive also monitored conversations on police telephone without a court order. All wiretapping is illegal in Central City.

*Corruption patrolling* consists of monitoring locations at which corruption is likely to occur: gambling houses, prostitution centers, unlicensed bars. In Oakland the jail was "patrolled" through regular interviews of bailees to see if jail officers had recommended a specific bail bondsman, an indication of kickback arrangements. In New York and Newburgh, police administrators observed police operations in locations prone to corruption.

*Integrity tests* are artificial situations, created by internal policing agents, which give police officers the opportunity to commit corrupt acts. The Oakland reform chief asked students to get arrested as drunks to see if their money would be stolen by the jail officers booking them (it was). New York applied similar tactics on a wide range of corruption-prone tasks, from returning found wallets to making undercover purchases of narcotics.

c. *Conducting investigations.* Premonitory intelligence allows an I.A.D. to apprehend corrupt officers in the act. Unless a corruption investigation is conducted covertly, however, the I.A.D. will not be able to effect an apprehension and collect the evidence required for a conviction. For when an investigation becomes overt—i.e., when the target becomes aware that he is under investigation—then the target is likely to put a halt to his corrupt activity for the time being.

In general, Oakland and New York conducted corruption investigations covertly, while Central City and Newburgh did not. Several procedural policies for conducting corruption investigations demonstrate the difference between the cities in the visibility of investigations to potential targets.

*Hours on duty* affect the range of investigative tactics which can be employed. If an internal policing unit works only on weekday business hours, as in Central City, it cannot employ surveillance and other covert tactics which require a 24-hour-a-day avail-

ability of investigators. Oakland and New York conduct investigations around the clock as necessary.

*Secrecy precautions*, such as the use of unrecognizable autos in investigations and tight control over files, can help insure that an investigation is not "blown". These precautions were taken in Oakland and New York, but not in Central City.

*Notifying the target* that he is under investigation makes further covert investigation impossible. Oakland and New York, therefore, did not make such notifications until the investigation was completed. Central City, following the police union movement's "policeman's bill of rights", notified the target as soon as the investigation begins.

*Interviews* are used at different stages of corruption investigations in different cities. Each person interviewed is a potential source of leakage for a covert investigation. The further along the investigation is at the time of the interview, the less damaging a leak is should it occur. Thus, in covert investigations interviews are generally the last step, which is the practice in New York and Oakland. In overt investigations interviews are the first step; that is the practice in Central City.

The superiority of the premonitory, proactive and covert strategies for internal policing is suggested by some data on dismissals. In New York and Oakland, the rate of officers dismissed from the department (for all causes, not just corruption) increased substantially after the scandal when a premonitory, proactive and covert investigative strategy was adopted. In Central City, where the internal policing strategy after the scandal remained postmonitory, reactive and overt, the dismissal rate declined.

### C. Corruption After Reform

In all four cities the measured level of organization of police corruption clearly declined after the big scandal and the appointment of a reform police executive. The data presented in the technical report show that most of the indicators of the level of corruption organization declined in the post-scandal years in all cities except Newburgh, where no ongoing corruption of any kind could be discovered. The central question is whether the observed decrease should be attributed to the effects of scandal alone, to the effects of reform policies alone, or to some combination of both. One problem in answering that question is that only one year after the scandal could be studied in Central City, while four years after the scandal could be studied in the other three cities. But on the basis of the available evidence, a plausible interpretation of the relative effects of scandal and of

reform policies can be offered.

*Effects of scandal:* Scandal seems to reduce the level of corruption organization in the short run, regardless of organizational control policies. A big scandal in the 1960's in Central City pushed the level of reported corruption organization way down, even though no change whatsoever occurred in organizational control policies. During the implementation of strong organizational controls in New York, an indicator of the number of officers terminating their involvement in corruption arrangements showed strong increases almost every time there was a new scandalous disclosure. But the deterrent effect on corruption of scandal alone seems to be short-lived. After the earlier Central City scandal, reported corruption organization increased to its pre-scandal level in about

two years.

*Effects of reform policies:* Premonitory organizational reform strategies seem to reduce the level of corruption organization in the longer run after scandal, and maintain a low level of organization as long as they are in effect. New York and Oakland adopted the most premonitory control strategies of the four cities. Both of these cities experienced the most substantial measured decline in corruption organization after the first post-scandal year (that is, in the second post-scandal year in Oakland, and the fourth post-scandal year in New York). After the peak decrease, corruption organization leveled off. In Oakland, it has stayed that way for over twenty years. If Newburgh and New York experience the same result, then the finding will be strengthened.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Assuming that the interpretations of the data are correct, and that the experience of four very different cities can be generalized to other American police departments, several tentative conclusions can be drawn from this study.

### A. Premonitory Strategies For Corruption Control Can Reduce the Level of Organization of Police Corruption

Many police executives might argue that merely reducing the level of organization of corruption is not enough, and that the point is to eliminate corruption entirely. While elimination may be the preferable goal, it may also be impossible. Every organization can be expected to have a "normal" amount of deviance and deviant members. The low-visibility opportunities for corruption events inherent in police work makes police organizations perhaps more likely than other organizations to have a continuing problem of misconduct. But it does seem that the cooperative corruption arrangements can be eliminated, perhaps because they are more vulnerable to detection. Arrangements were apparently eliminated altogether in Oakland and Newburgh, and reduced to relative rarity in New York.

### B. Postmonitory Strategies For Corruption Control Do Not Seem To Be As Effective As Premonitory Strategies

While the data do not clearly demonstrate that postmonitory strategies fail to deter corruption, neither do they refute that hypothesis. All of the

cities had postmonitory strategies for internal policing for several years before the scandal occurred. Other factors, such as insufficient manpower resources, may account for the failure of postmonitory controls to deter corruption in those instances. But in every case in which premonitory strategies were employed, the level of corruption organization went down and stayed down. If this conclusion is correct, then one could predict an increase in the level of corruption organization in Central City as the deterrent effect of the big scandal fades away.

### C. The Same Strategies For Corruption Control Can Be Employed in a Police Department of Any Size, Although the Tactics May Differ

Not every police department is large enough to warrant a separate unit for internal policing, or elaborate procedures for supervisory control. But any police department can conduct the internal policing and supervisory functions in a premonitory fashion, even if the police executive performs those functions by himself. The key to detecting ongoing corruption is the proactive development of sources of intelligence in potential areas of corruption, and looking for corruption wherever it might be found. The New York City Police Department's manual of corruption "hazards" provides a good list of the places to look for corruption.

Even the smallest police department can try to change those aspects of the task environment and political environment that are conducive to corrup-

tion. Doing so can be risky for the police executive, especially any attempts to alter political arrangements. But there is a great deal of power available in the tool of criminal investigation. There is no reason why police executives cannot employ that tool against both those politicians and those members of

the general public who cooperate with and help maintain corrupt police practices. Police departments are so closely linked to their environments that any reform of a corrupt police department may ultimately hinge on a "reform" of the police environment—the community itself.

## APPENDIX SOURCES OF DATA

### A. Data Sources on Organizational Reform Policies

| Source                  | CITY     |              |         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|----------|
|                         | New York | Central City | Oakland | Newburgh |
| <i>Interviews:</i>      |          |              |         |          |
| Reform Chief            | +        | +            | -       | +        |
| I.A.D. Commander        | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| I.A.D. Officers         | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Intelligence Commander  | -        | +            | +       | N.A.     |
| Intelligence Officers   | -        | +            | +       | N.A.     |
| Vice Commander          | +        | -            | -       | N.A.     |
| Patrol Commander        | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Detective Commander     | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Municipal Executive     | -        | +            | +       | +        |
| Several Random Officers | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| <i>Written Records:</i> |          |              |         |          |
| Newspapers              | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| I.A.D. Files            | +        | +            | -       | +        |
| Chief's Memos           | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| General Orders          | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Personnel Orders        | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Informers Fees Budget   | -        | +            | -       | -        |
| Annual Reports          | +        | -            | +       | -        |
| Observation             | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| Total Sources           | 14       | 16           | 13      | 10       |

### B. Data Sources on the Organization of Police Corruption

| Source                         | CITY     |              |         |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|----------|
|                                | New York | Central City | Oakland | Newburgh |
| <i>Written Records:</i>        |          |              |         |          |
| Newspaper Stories              | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Writings of Police Officers    | +        | -            | -       | +        |
| Citizen Complaints             | +        | +            | -       | +        |
| I.A.D. Files                   | +        | +            | -       | -        |
| Chief's Files                  | -        | +            | +       | -        |
| <i>Verbal Sources:</i>         |          |              |         |          |
| Criminal Trials                | +        | +            | -       | -        |
| Department Trials              | -        | +            | -       | -        |
| Ex-corrupt Officers            | +        | -            | -       | +        |
| Other Officers                 | +        | +            | +       | +        |
| Reform Chief                   | +        | +            | -       | +        |
| I.A.D. Commander               | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| I.A.D. Officers                | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| Intelligence Commander         | -        | +            | +       | N.A.     |
| Intelligence Officers          | -        | +            | +       | N.A.     |
| Vice Commander                 | +        | -            | +       | N.A.     |
| Vice Officers                  | +        | +            | +       | N.A.     |
| Municipal Executive            | -        | +            | +       | +        |
| Public Safety Director         | N.A.     | +            | N.A.    | N.A.     |
| Prosecutor                     | -        | +            | +       | -        |
| Other Law Enforcement Agencies | +        | +            | -       | -        |
| Reporters                      | +        | +            | -       | -        |
| Other Outside Observers        | +        | +            | +       | -        |
| Total Sources                  | 15       | 19           | 12      | 7        |

+ Used  
- Not Used  
N.A. Not Applicable

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